



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS.

DR. J. HUTCHISON STIRLING.

[We copy the following interesting sketch of the man and philosopher from a series of articles on "The Fathers of the City" (Edinburgh), published in "The Express" for July 20, 1882.—EDITOR.]

Deep-rooted in the rugged Scottish nature is the love of philosophy. From the years when Duns Scotus preached his gospel of thought down to the more brilliant ebullitions of a Hamilton or a Ferrier, the philosophic influence seems to have leavened every class and every mind. An essential feature of the national character, the movement has gone on through the centuries until it culminated at the finish of last century in the magnificent pyrotechnic display of Reid, Hume, and Smith, at whose rainbow-colors the whole of the speculative world was at once delighted and astonished. These were but the ruddy streaks of dawn that betokened the rise of the life-giving sun of Scottish philosophy, and in the warmth of the rays of Sir William Hamilton a host of aspiring students gave to the world the fruits of their lonely hours. The Scottish Aristotle, however, waned in the course of mortal existence, and, several years after his death, when least expected, a star gleamed across the firmament of human thought. Imbued with the thousand teachings of the French and German schools, and a deep drinker at the fountain of his own native philosophy, Dr. Hutchison Stirling at once, by the publication of his "Secret of Hegel," leaped from the obscurity of his study into the fierce light which beats around the throne of intellect. The mazes of thought into which Hegel's seeming perspicuity had led his readers were now laid bare before the latter-day student, and the intensely practical teachings of the German philosopher glow in all their beauty through the glass-like medium of his translator and disciple. "It is a popular error"—Stirling adjures his reader in the introduction to his Hegel, and he gives utterance to the sentiment with the pardonable pride of a master—"it is a popular error that Kant and Hegel are difficult because they soar so high, because they have so much of the 'fervid' in them, and especially because they are so *mystic*." It is only the haze which clings to the summer sunshine; it disappears soon before the all-absorbing light of the luminary itself. "The difficulties of Hegel are simply technical, and his logic is to be read only by such means as will enable us to read the 'Principia' of Newton—industry, tenacity, perseverance." What a life-drama these words conjure up before the biographer of any philosopher—of long days spent in research, and longer nights passed in evolving from the depths of consciousness the doctrines with which the student would fain rear his temple of thought! They have been the watchwords of Dr. Stirling's life. Industry in cultivating literature and science, tenacity in his beloved pursuit of philosophy, perseverance in climbing the arduous precipice of thought—have been engraved in golden letters on his brow in years past and present, and whether we

recognize in him the critic of Douglas Jerrold, Macaulay, and Tennyson, or the acute and skilful expounder of Hegel, Dr. Stirling stands forth among the authors of the present day by the originality and piquancy of his style and reasoning.

It is now sixty-two years ago since James Hutchison Stirling was born, on the 22d of June, within the murky confines of Glasgow. From his earliest years grave unto thoughtfulness, and with a certain philosophic method entering into his youthful studies, he passed from childhood to boyhood, flooding his mind with a stream of literature and romance. His father, an eminent Glasgow merchant, was a profound mathematician, and thus the child received very early an incentive to thought. He was but a lad entering upon his fourteenth year when the rich world of university life opened its vista before him, and forthwith we find young Stirling in the academic shades of Glasgow, crystallizing and acquiring as each new experience and study brought its influence to bear upon his rapidly developing mental faculties. First the milk and honey of classical lore, administered by the brilliant Sandford and Ramsay, intoxicated the young student, but soon the sterner mathematics and logic recalled him to what he was now fond of recognizing as his path in life. Even at this early period philosophy was alike his passion and despair. Its intricate problems and its halo of mysticism at once charmed and repelled; he frequently dreamed, as many young philosophers do, who have caught a glimpse by means of a winter's study of the wondrous and perplexing world revealed to them; but from his dreamings, as in similar cases, rugged reality brought its sudden awakening. That his career in Arts brought many palms of victory to Stirling we are well convinced, and it must have been with regret, if not with something akin to pain, that he deserted his congenial speculations for the somewhat more prosy, but more philanthropic, life of medicine. For four years he toiled in harness, until 1842, when he passed the Royal College of Surgeons, of which he has now been long a Fellow, thus gaining his release from what had been a long and colorless apprenticeship. During these sessions of student life Mr. Stirling had been devoting the rare moments of idleness in which he indulged, to the perusal and acquisition of what literature and philosophy might be for the day attracting attention or provoking criticism. When he left the kindly arms of his University to open with his surgeon's knife the oyster of the world, we thus see with what mental endowments he went forth to conquer. Medical men, as a class, are rarely *littérateurs*, but here we have a notable exception, and it must have been with unspeakable joy that he was received, both as an able surgeon and as a man of refinement and culture, by the small circle into which his first appointment led him.

The Hirwain Ironworks, in Wales, where Mr. Crawshay held sway during these years, was the new world into which his professional skill had called Mr. Stirling. There he found wide enough scope for the execution of long-cherished plans. His patients demanded his first attention, and into their cares and sorrows he threw all the sympathies of his heart, making himself beloved at every hearth to which he brought the sunshine of his presence. He had now somewhat more leisure time to pursue his favorite literary studies than when a medical student at Glasgow, and his fancy soon commenced urging him to use his pen to more advantageous purpose than formerly. The scenery and life around him were suggestive of ideas that soon took shape in the crucible of his mind, and Douglas Jerrold's "*Shilling Magazine*," the "*Truth-Seeker*," and Leigh Hunt's "*London Journal*" soon found in their young Welsh correspondent a contributor of such sketches as not only rendered their pages fascinating, but also attracted attention wherever they were read. His home he depicted in the fourth volume of Douglas Jerrold's

"Magazine" under the title, "A Peep into the Welsh Iron Valley," in which he gives, with characteristic piquancy, his impressions of life among rough and uncouth miners and workmen. Nor did his busy brain confine itself to the production of magazine articles. He still yearned after the love of his student days, and the ponderous tomes of philosophy, with which his every library shelf was stored, speak eloquently of the manner in which he was wont to spend his studious leisure. Every school of ancient and modern thought was scanned with the keen soul-reading that is synonymous with the only "true method." Volume after volume disappeared into the chaos of his ever-changing mind, building up for the future a safe foundation and order.

During the year 1851 a great sorrow gloomed over the heart of our young philosopher. His father died, and Mr. Stirling required all his philosophy to fortify himself against his grief. Yielding up the cares of his medical practice to a successor, he parted from what had become to him a dearly beloved home. He had newly married, and, on his father's death, inheriting something more than the traditional competency of the philosopher, he found himself well able to gratify the close-hugged desires of his youth. France, with its learning, science, and sunshine, was the first country to which he directed his steps, and here, in an out-of-the-way corner, he devoted all his liveliest energies to the studies which were absorbing his every attention and care. Now the germ was taking root which was destined in after years to produce the "Secret of Hegel," with its revelation of mysteries. Fichte, Schelling, and Kant poured all their rich treasures at his feet, and, inspired with an ambition which was now becoming to him a stern reality, Mr. Stirling left France to find in the libraries of Germany the necessary material for the accomplishment of his design. Whether the idea of writing his work arose while roaming amid the old university towns of the Fatherland, or immediately after his return in 1857 to England, it is impossible for us to say. The two volumes of the "Secret" burst upon the world in 1865, and that they were the fruition of what had been years of thought is amply proved by his modest introductory words:

"This is the last fruit, though first published, of a long and earnest labor devoted, in the main, to two men only, Kant and Hegel, and more closely, in the main, to the three principal works of the one, and the two principal works of the other. This study has been the writer's chief—not just to say sole—occupation during a greater number of years, and for a greater number of hours in each day of these years, than it is perhaps prudent to avow at present. The reader, then, has a good right to expect something mature from so long, unintermitted, and concentrated an endeavor; it is to be feared, however, that the irregularity of the very first look of the thing will lead him to believe, on the contrary, that he is only deceived. . . . The importance of the matter might, in such a case, obtain excuse for a certain extemporaneousness that lay in the form—that, in short, the matter of years might compensate the manner of months."

The rich, exuberant style with which he attacks the intricacies of his subject throws a charm round Hegel and his work that proves fascinating, and which we would recommend to all philosophic writers. It is rarely we find in the absurdly pedantic and dry-as-dust ebullitions of Scotch or German thought such brilliance of metaphor as we have here:

"One approaches Hegel for the first time—such is the voice of rumor and such the subjects he involves—as one might approach some enchanted palace of the Arabian stories. New powers—imagination is assured (were but the entrance gained)—await one there—secrets—as it were the ring of Solomon and the pass-keys of the universe. But, very truly, if thus magical is the promise, no less magical is the difficulty; and one

wanders round the book—as Aboulfaouaris round the palace—*irrito*, without success, but not without a sufficiency of vexation. Book—palace, is absolutely inaccessible, for the known can show no bridge to it; or, if accessible, then it is absolutely impenetrable, for it begins *not*, it enters *not*; what seems the doorway receives but to reject, and every attempt at a window is baffled by a fall.”

The beauty of the language equals the beauty of his thoughts. Stirling seems to revel in an abundance of metaphor that lends the dry husks of logic a sweetness and flavor hitherto unknown. The book was published, and that it was received with fervor goes without saying. Ferrier, years before, had pointed to Hegel as an alpine summit, unattainable and wreathed forever in perennial snows. The valleys of thought seemed veritable “seas of darkness,” which alike allured and destroyed. But to the aid of the timid explorer now hastened a trustworthy guide who had already surmounted what had appeared the impassable, and at the sound of his voice the gloom and terrors faded like clouds before the sunshine.

Since his return from the Continent, Dr. Stirling’s life has been that of the student. His love of literature and philosophy has increased with every year, and the series of books that has issued from the press with his name on their title-pages tells of the ardent spirit with which his mind is imbued. Honors commenced to shower their laurels upon his head immediately after the publication of his “Secret of Hegel,” and Edinburgh University was not slow to award him the meed of praise when she conferred upon him the degree of LL. D. in 1867. Dr. Stirling had already devoted his heartiest energies to the study of her great philosopher, his “Sir William Hamilton on the Philosophy of Perception” appearing two years previously. Immense interest was excited in the philosophic world by the announcement, a few months afterwards, that the already famous Hegelian scholar was busy preparing an annotated translation of “Schwegler’s History of Philosophy,” and when, during the year, it was given to the world, it was eagerly conned and criticised. That it has met with wide-spread success is amply shown by the eloquent facts that in 1877 a sixth edition was published, and that each student finds in it a key to the wondrous intricacies of philosophic lore. A volume of critical literary essays appeared in 1868, under the title of “Jerrold, Tennyson, and Macaulay, and other Critical Essays,” which went far to prove his wide acquaintance with the classics of the English language. His other works are: “Address on Materialism,” 1868; “As Regards Protoplasm,” 1869, of which a second edition was issued in 1872; “Lectures on the Philosophy of Law, etc.,” 1873; “Burns in Drama, together with Saved Leaves,” 1878. His latest volume on philosophy, “The Text-book of Kant,” which was published a few months ago, showed with what fervor he has pursued his favorite study since his return from the Continent, where he drank so deeply at the fountain-head of German thought.

THE GOSPEL OF PAIN.

Pain as an element in the world’s development is a subject of powerful interest to historian, philosopher, and artist, since it marks the limit between the active and passive condition of mind. The Hindoos are the first among the ancient and pagan nations of history to recognize pain as a means. With them the otherwise impassable relation of caste, which birth decides, could be transcended through this means only. They could attain the highest or Brahm through physical suffering and by reducing